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X-FACTOR

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DIRECT EDITION

X-FACTOR

IN A SOCIETY WHERE MUTANTS AND FORMER MUTANTS ALIKE FEEL THREATENED BY THE WORLD AROUND THEM, THEY TURN TO THEIR FIRST, BEST LINE OF DEFENSE WHENEVER TROUBLE ARISES: X-FACTOR, THE PRIVATE DETECTIVE AGENCY FOUNDED BY MADROX, THE MULTIPLE MAN.

WHEN WE LAST LEFT OUR HEROES...



WHILE INVESTIGATING THE DEATH OF ONE OF HIS DUPLICATES, JAMIE MADROX DISCOVERS THAT MUTANT TOWN IS BEING OCCUPIED BY THE U.S. ARMY. THE ARMY'S PRESENCE IS IN RESPONSE TO THE POSTURING OF THE X-CELL, A PARAMILITARY ORGANIZATION COMPRISED OF DEPOWERED MUTANTS WHO BELIEVE THE GOVERNMENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR CURRENT PLIGHT. RECENTLY THE MYSTERIOUS ELIJAH, THE LEADER OF THE X-CELL, MET WITH QUICKSILVER TO DISCUSS THE RUMORS THAT QUICKSILVER CAN RESTORE LOST POWERS. QUICKSILVER AGREES TO HELP ELIJAH, BUT CAUTIONS HIM THAT THE PROCESS IS DANGEROUS. IF QUICKSILVER IS TO HELP, HE MUST FIRST HAVE SOMEONE SERVE AS A VESSEL FOR HIS POWER.

MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE X-FACTOR DETECTIVE AGENCY, SIRYN AND MONET RETURN TO HEADQUARTERS WITH NICOLE, A YOUNG EX-MUTANT REFUGEE. THE TEAM PRESSURES LAYLA MILLER TO USE HER PRECOGNITIVE ABILITIES TO HELP THEM TRACK X-CELL, AND, RELUCTANTLY, LAYLA AGREES. SHE SPLITS UP THE TEAM, SENDING THEM TO SEEMINGLY RANDOM LOCALES; AND IN THE PROCESS, LEADS THEM TO THE BLOB AND FATALE, X-CELL OPERATIVES. THE BATTLE GOES WELL UNTIL MARROW APPEARS, EAGER TO SETTLE OLD SCORES.

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AW...
MAN.

PENDEJO
BLOB, PUNCHED
ME IN THE 'NADS. HE
IS SO...GOIN' DOWN
FOR...FOR THAT...



MADROX?
MADROX, YOU
OKAY?



MADROX...?

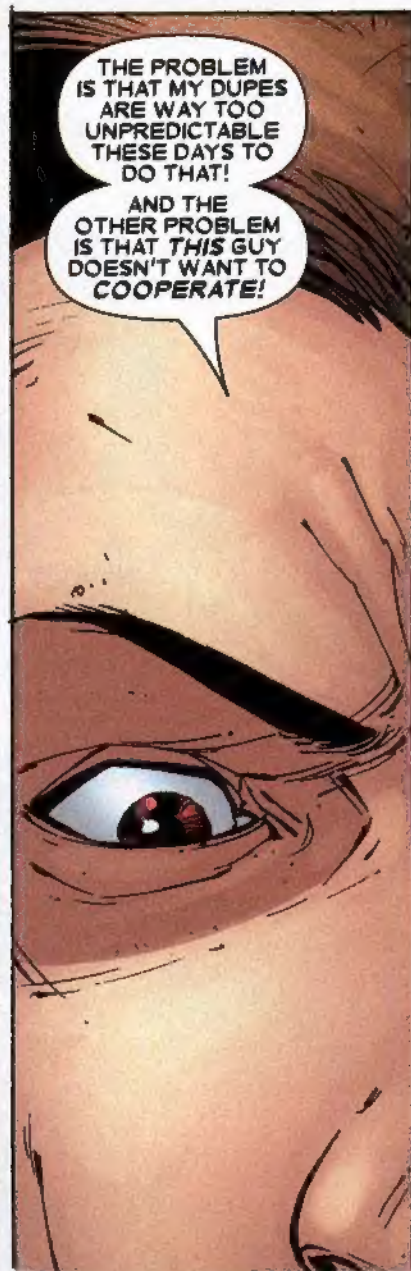
FATALE
POISONED MY
DUPE.

CAN YOU
SURVIVE IF YOU
ABSORB HIM?



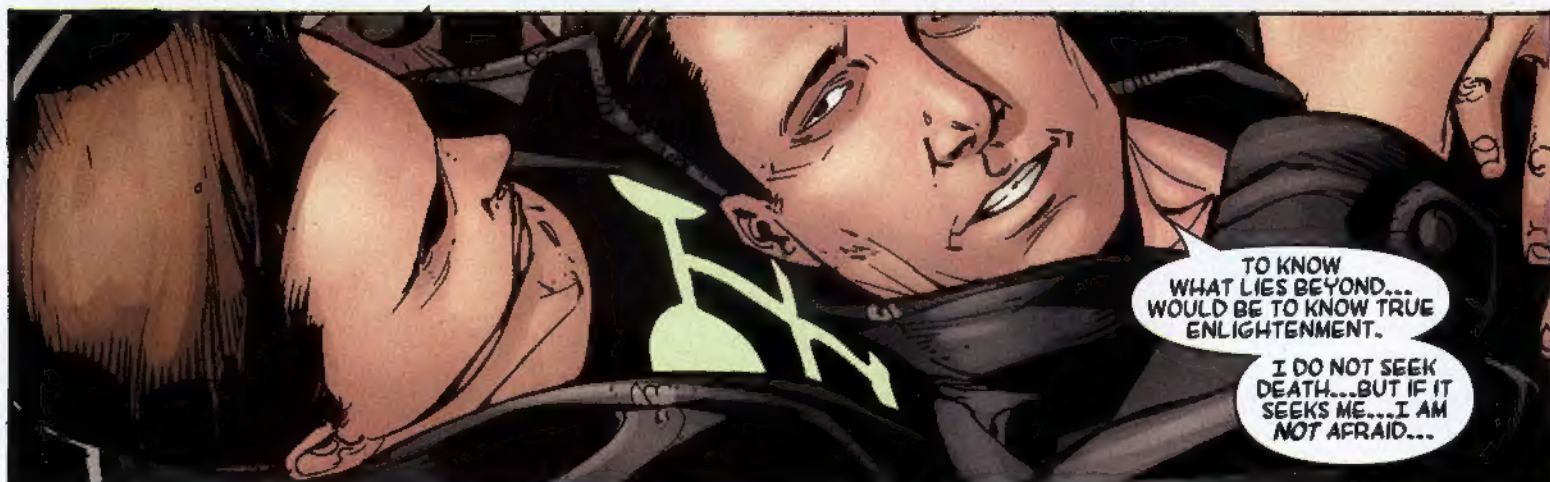
NORMALLY,
I'D HAVE THIS DUPE
MAKE MORE DUPES. IT'D
DIFFUSE THE POISON
AND I COULD REABSORB
THE LOT OF THEM
WITH NO DANGER.

SO WHAT'S
THE PROBLEM!
GEEZ, MADROX,
THEY'RE GETTING
AWAY! WE'RE ON
THE CLOCK...



THE PROBLEM
IS THAT MY DUPES
ARE WAY TOO
UNPREDICTABLE
THESE DAYS TO
DO THAT!

AND THE
OTHER PROBLEM
IS THAT *THIS* GUY
DOESN'T WANT TO
COOPERATE!



TO KNOW
WHAT LIES BEYOND...
WOULD BE TO KNOW TRUE
ENLIGHTENMENT.

I DO NOT SEEK
DEATH...BUT IF IT
SEEKS ME...I AM
NOT AFRAID...



GOOD FOR HIM.
BUT I AM AFRAID.

MY DUPES ARE GETTING WAY
TOO DEATH-OBSESSED LATELY.
PLUS I WAS WILLING TO STAND
THERE AND LET THE "REVEREND
MADDOX" PUT A CAP IN MY HEAD.

WHAT THE HELL IS
WRONG WITH MY SURVIVAL
INSTINCT THESE DAYS?

MADROX!
YOU GOTTA GET
OFF THE DIME
HERE!



IF HE'S A
GONER, THEN HE'S
A GONER.

I DON'T
WANT TO SOUND
HARSH, BUT SAY
YOUR GOOD-BYES
AND LET'S GO.



YOU'RE
RIGHT. GOOD-
BYE.



MADROX!!!



WHAT
DID YOU--?!

JAMIE!!!
AW GEEZ....!

SURVIVAL. THAT'S WHAT
IT'S ALL ABOUT. WHO
WANTS IT, AND HOW MUCH.





IT'S WHAT ANYBODY WANTS TO DO, I GUESS. SURVIVE. EVERYTHING ELSE... THE NEED TO EAT, TO PROCREATE, FIGHT OR FLIGHT...IT ALL COMES FROM SURVIVAL.

THAT'S ONE OF THE REASONS WE TEND TO SEEK OTHERS LIKE OURSELVES. BETTER CHANCE OF SURVIVAL IN GROUPS.

STAND DOWN, SARAH...ALL OF YOU. SARAH, PLEASE...PUT THE PIGSTICKER AWAY, BEFORE I BLAST YOU INTO NEXT WEEK FROM OVER HERE.

YOU HAVE NO POWERS AND YOU HAVE NO CHANCE.

OF COURSE, EVEN IF YOU HAD POWERS, WE'D STILL EASILY KICK YOUR--

MONET! YOU'RE NOT HELPING.

WHAT GAVE YOU THE IMPRESSION I WAS TRYING TO?





NOW COME ALONG. THERE'S SOME NICE PEOPLE FROM THE GOVERNMENT WHO WANT TO TALK TO YOU.

OH, IS THAT HOW IT IS? FINE. LEMME TALK TO YA IN A LANGUAGE YOU'LL UNDERSTAND.



WOO
WOO WOO WOO
WOO! NYUK NYUK
NYUK!



WHAT THE HELL IS HE DOING?

I THINK HE'S IMPLYING WE'RE STOOGES.

ARE YOU SURE? IT SEEMS TO ME HE'S HAVING A BREAKDOWN OF SOME SORT.



THAT'S RIGHT! **STOOGES!** YOU BILL YOURSELF AS THE PROTECTORS OF MUTANT TOWN...

BUT WHEN THE GOVERNMENT SAYS "JUMP," YOU SAY "HOW HIGH?"



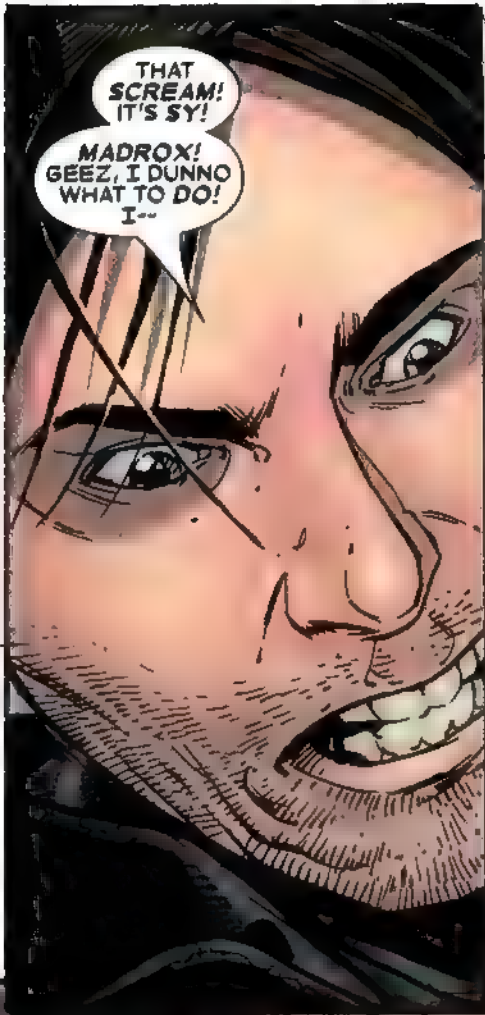
YOU'RE NOT KNOWING ALL THE FACTS, SARAH, AND I'M NOT ABOUT TO DISCUSS THEM WITH YOU.



NOW COME ALONG QUIETLY BEFORE YOU GET--







THAT SCREAM!
IT'S SY!
MADROX!
GEEZ, I DUNNO
WHAT TO DO!
I--



I'M...I'M
OKAY.
ABSORBING
THE DUPE...BROUGHT
THE...THE POISON TO
HALF STRENGTH...THAT
WAS ENOUGH...
YOU'RE
SURE...?

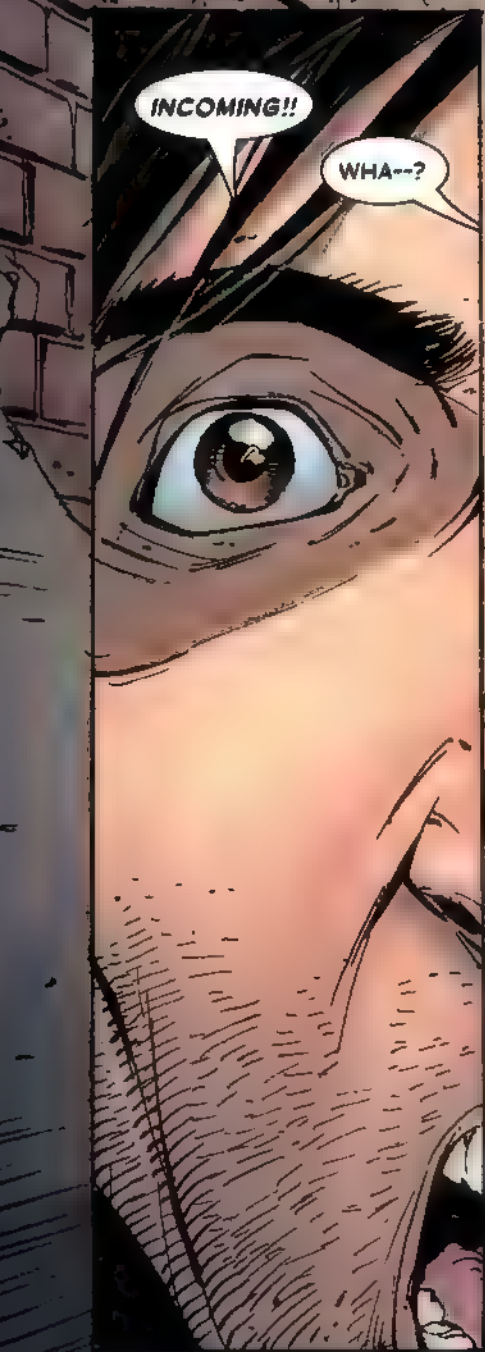
NOT
REALLY,
NO.



'CAUSE WE DON'T
NEED YOU DYING
RIGHT NOW.
JUST CALL
ME GLORIA
GAYNOR.

HUH?

I WILL
SURVIVE.

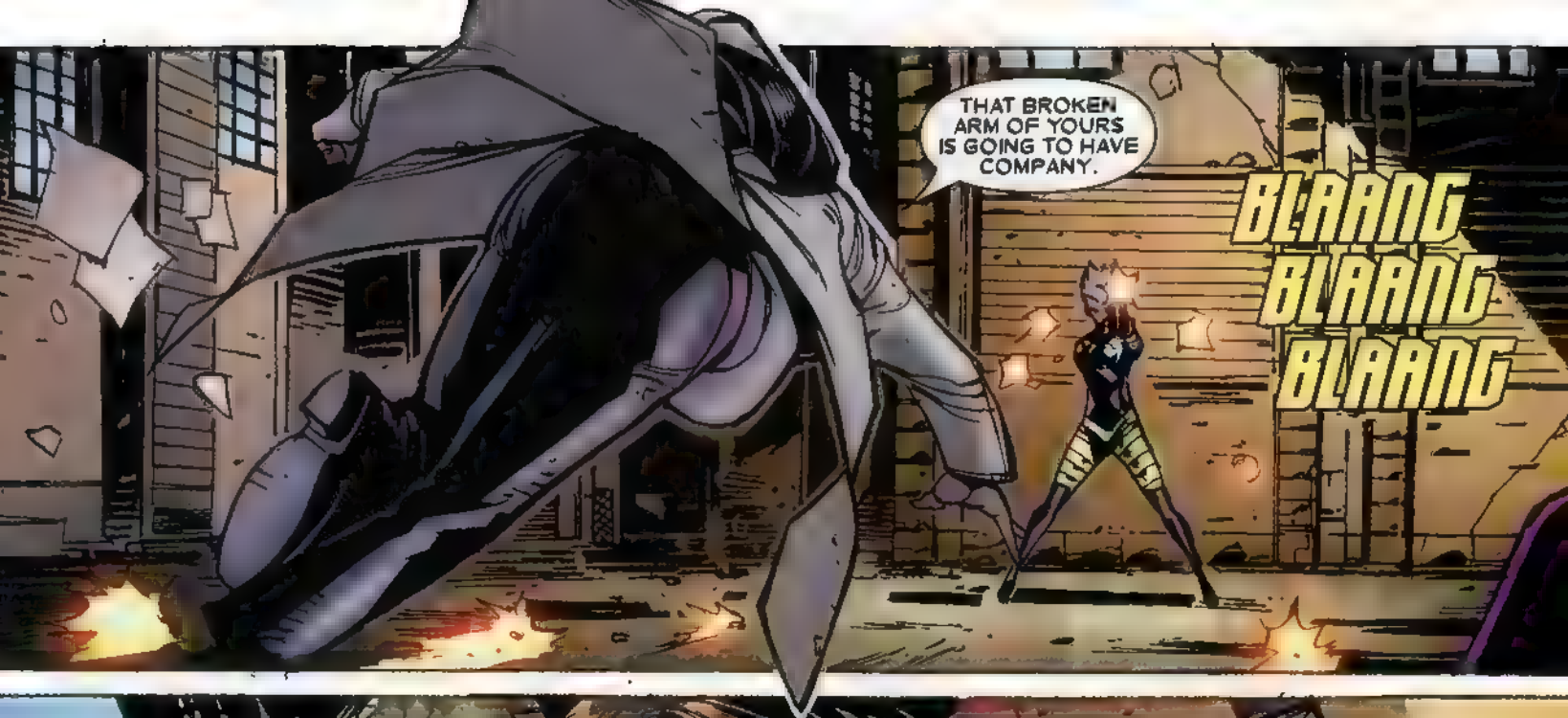


INCOMING!!

WHA--?



SOMETHING
TELLS ME THIS IS
SIRYN'S WORK.



THAT BROKEN
ARM OF YOURS
IS GOING TO HAVE
COMPANY.

**BLAANG
BLAANG
BLAANG**



SY! I'M
HERE! DON'T
WOR--

**BLAANG
BLAANG**



ARRGH!!!

PEOW

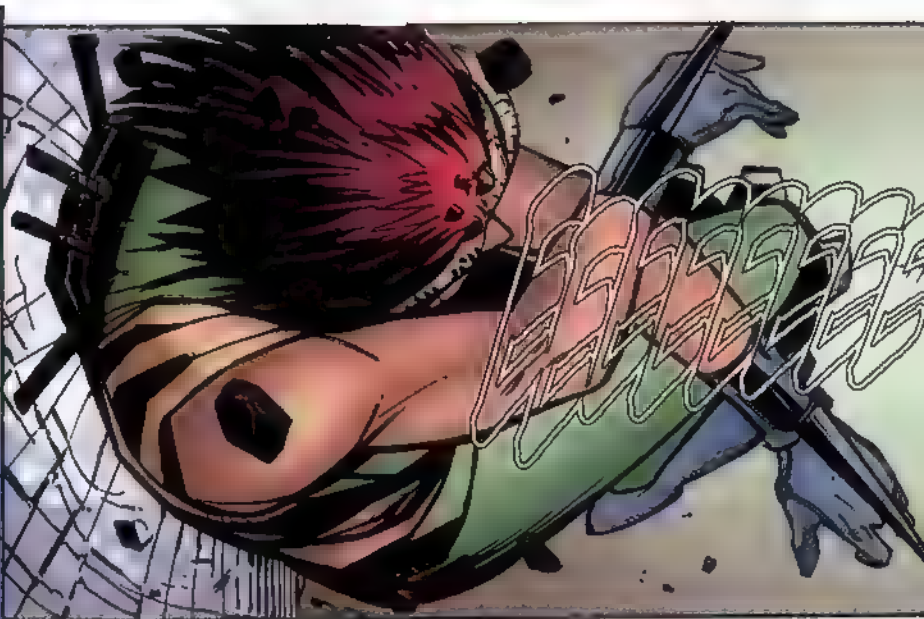
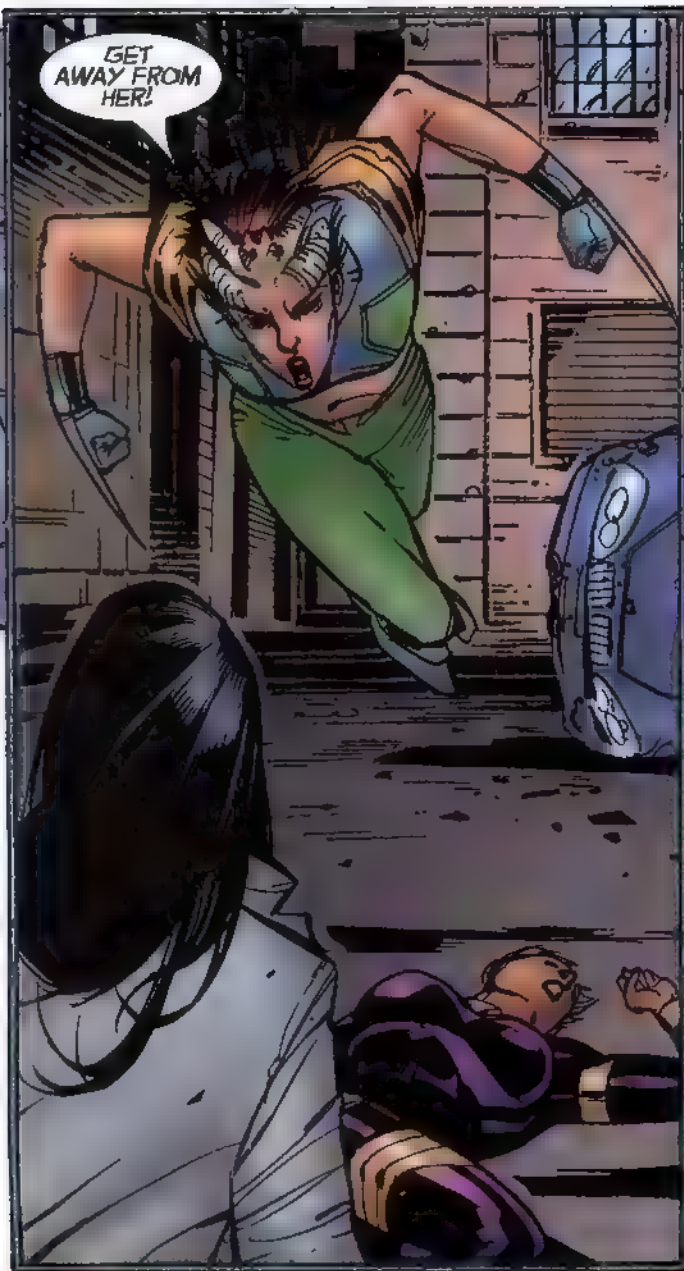
BLAANG



CAN'T
DECIDE, THOUGH,
IF IT SHOULD BE
ANOTHER BROKEN
ARM...OR A BROKEN
JAW.

FEEL FREE
TO STATE YOUR
PREFERENCES,
PROVIDED YOU
CAN TALK.

UNFFFFFFF!!!



I COULD HAVE TAKEN HER.

LAST I LOOKED, WE'RE STILL A TEAM.

I'M MORE OF A ONE-WOMAN TEAM, IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T--



UH-OH.

I'M FINE...I'M FINE...

YOU'RE BLEEDING BADLY. SHE MAY HAVE SEVERED AN ARTERY.

THANK GOD, RED GOES WITH MY OUTFIT.

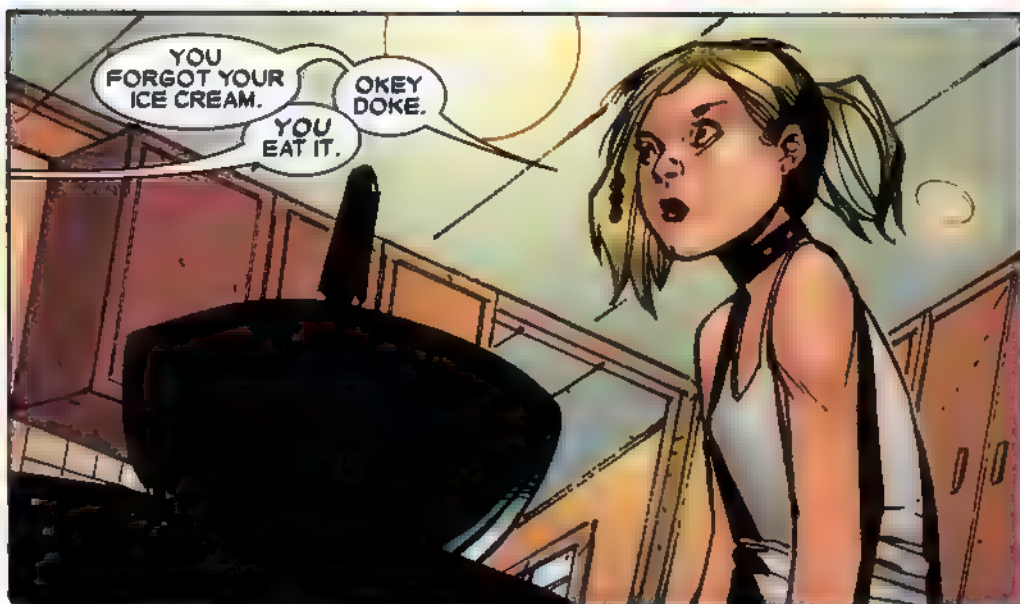
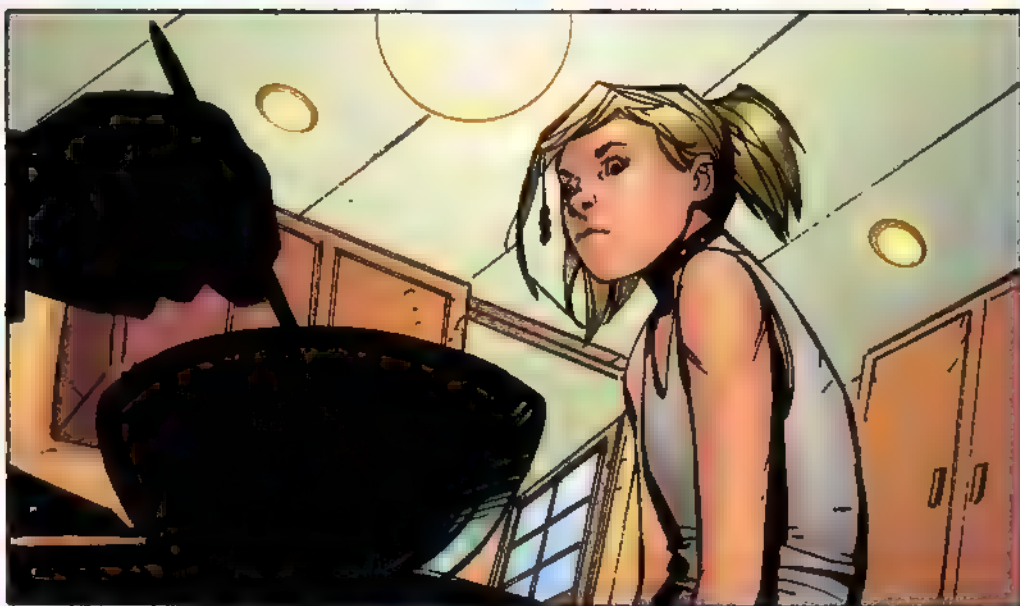
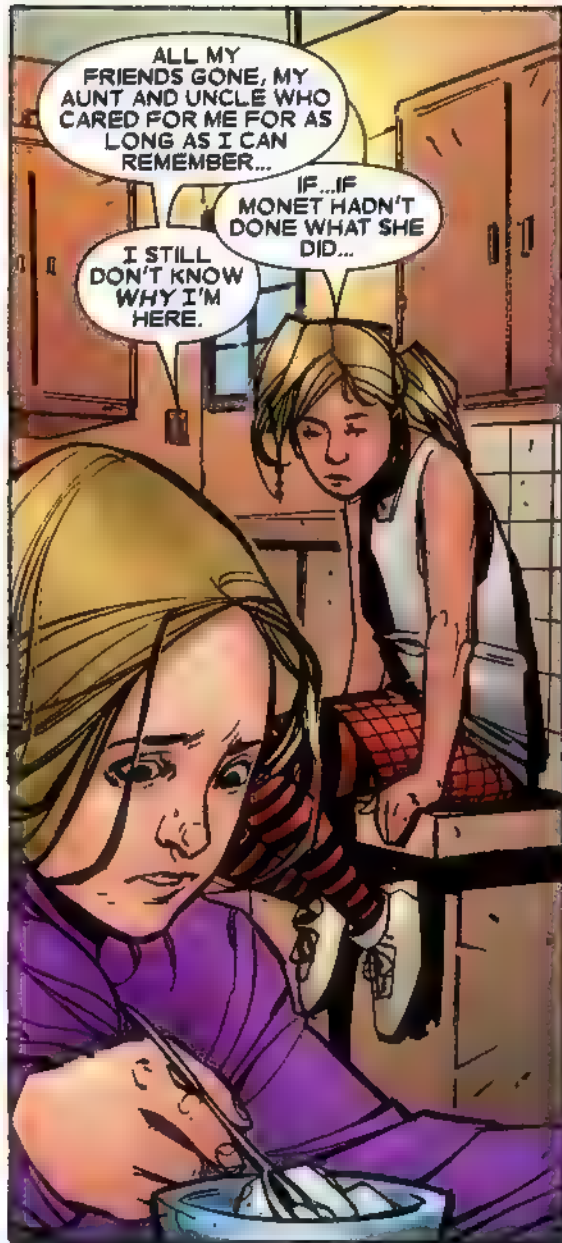


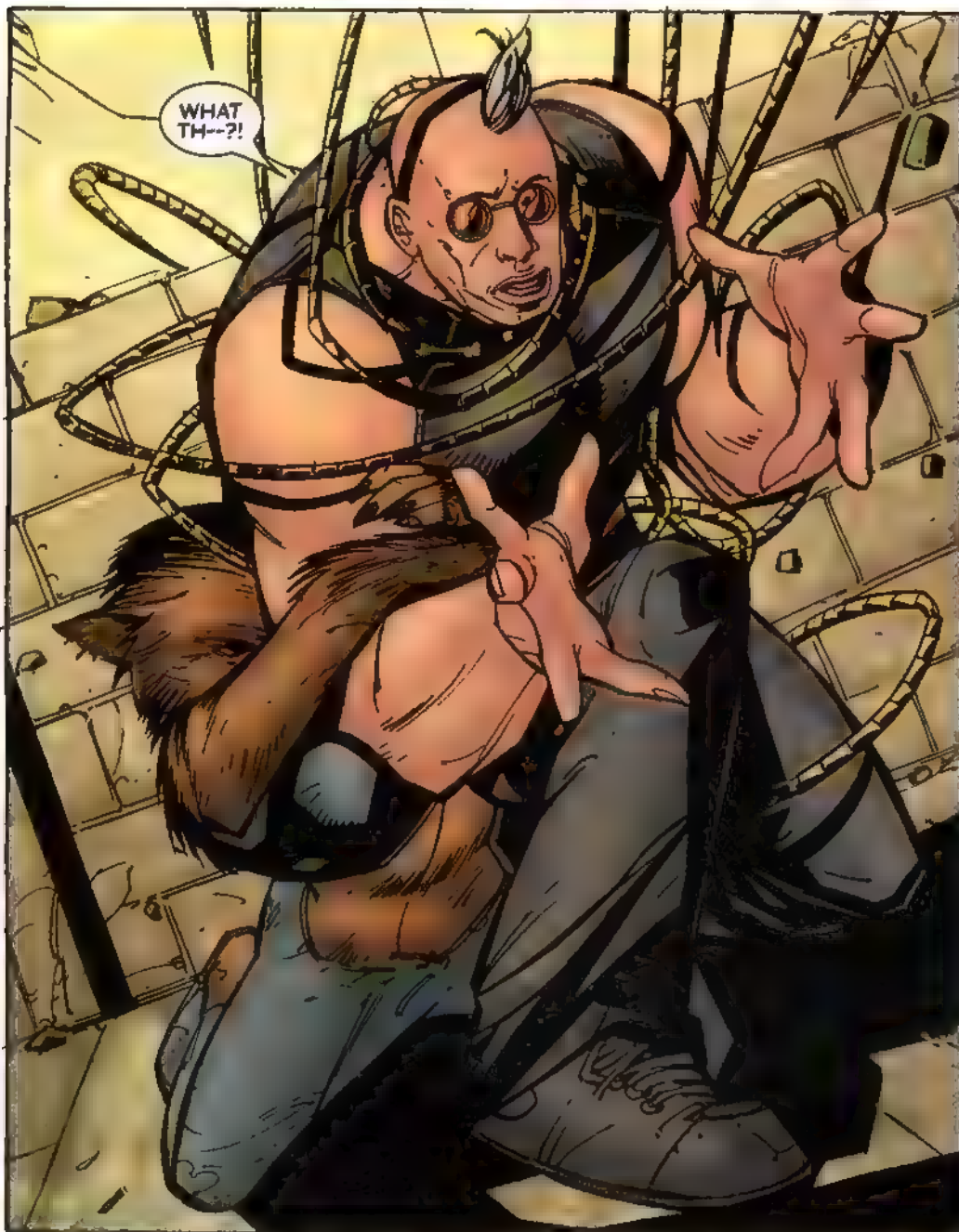
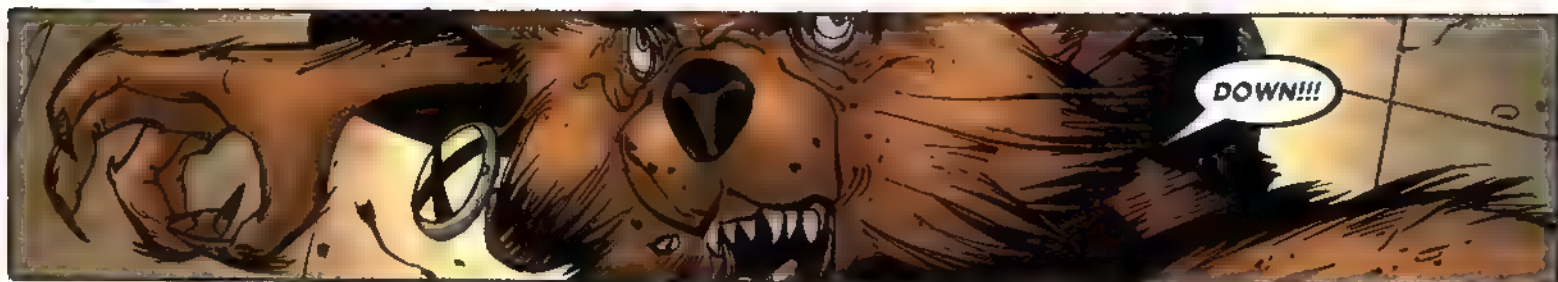
JUST TAKE IT EASY. LET ME APPLY SOME PRESSURE, SEE IF THAT HELPS.

OH, GOOD. I...I WORK BEST UNDER PRESSURE... AAHHHHH!!! DAMMIT, MONET...!



DO YOU WANT TO BE IN PAIN OR DO YOU WANT TO DIE?







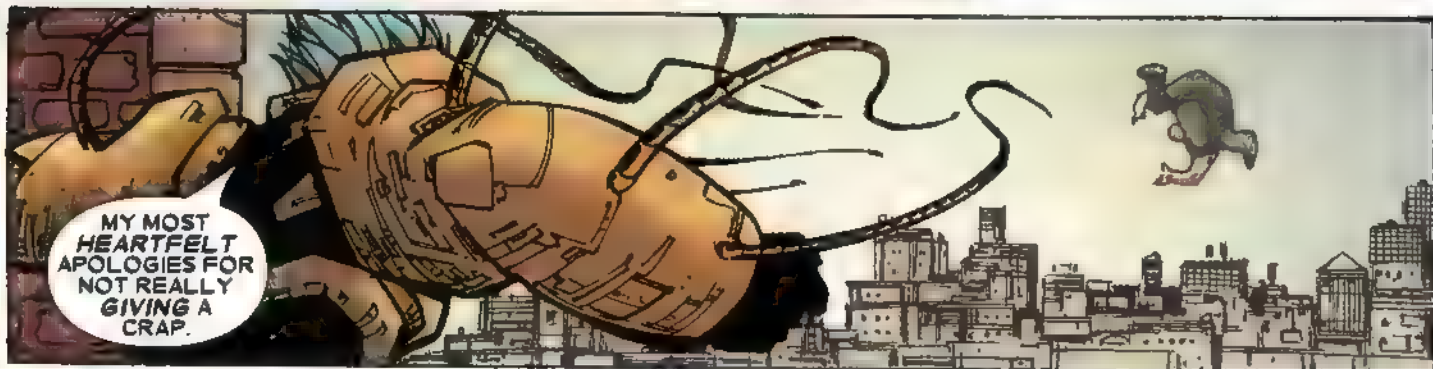
OH, IT'S YOU!
YOU KNOW ME?

SURE!
YOU'RE THE GUY WHO'S ABOUT T'GET A WHOLE BIG HELPIN' OF MY FOOT UP HIS BUTT!



I AM NILS STYGER. I AM ABYSS.

OH YEAH? WELL I HAPPEN TO BE--



MY MOST HEARTFELT APOLOGIES FOR NOT REALLY GIVING A CRAP.



GUIDO!
I'VE GOT TO--



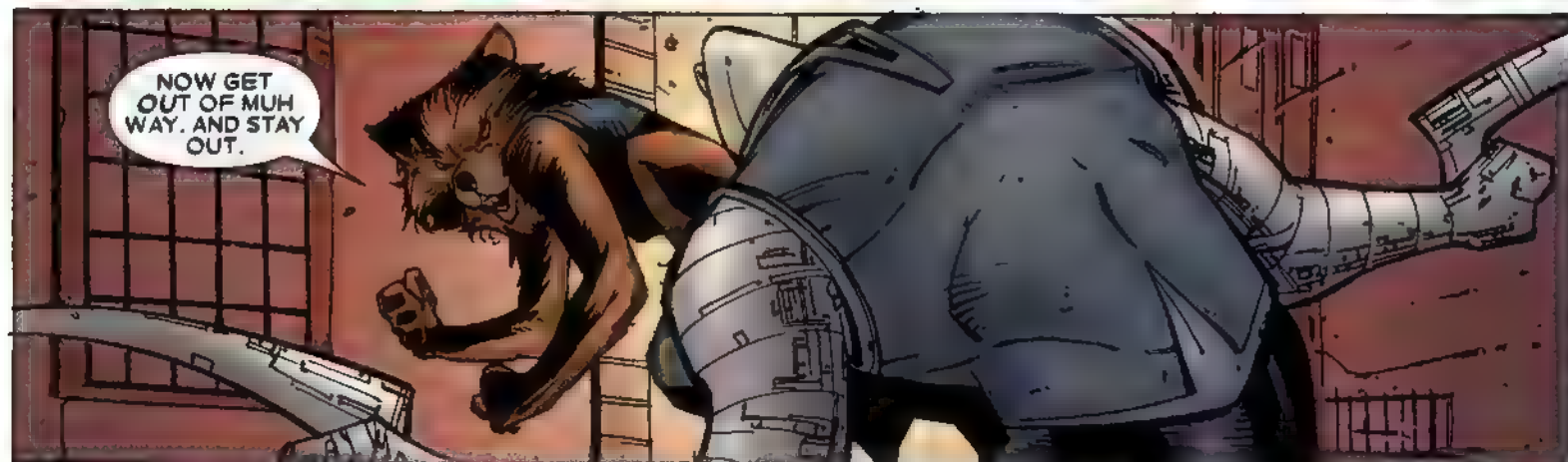
OH, YOU CANNA BE SERIOUS.

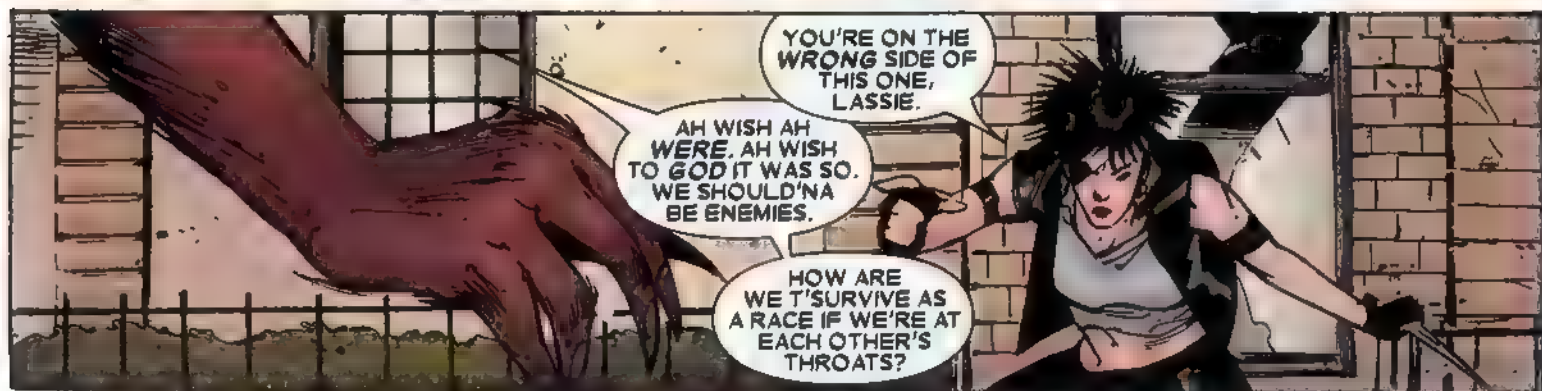


REAPER!!!



I'D STAY BACK IF I WERE YOU, SINCLAIR.

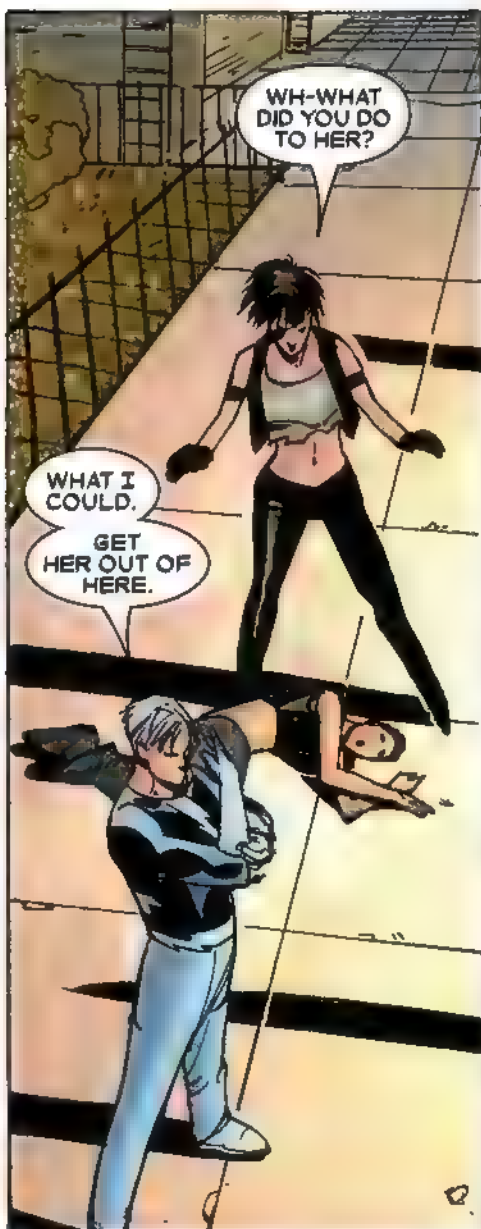






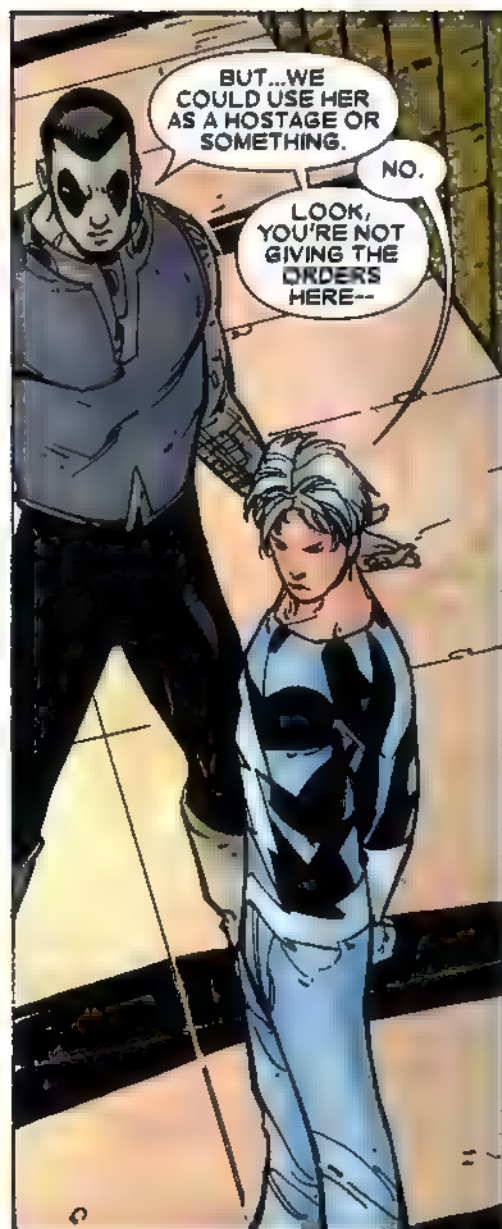
SOMETIMES IT'S
REPUTATIONS...
ALLIANCES...

AND PEOPLE WILL
DO WHATEVER
THEY NEED TO, IN
ORDER TO KEEP
THEM INTACT.



WH-WHAT
DID YOU DO
TO HER?

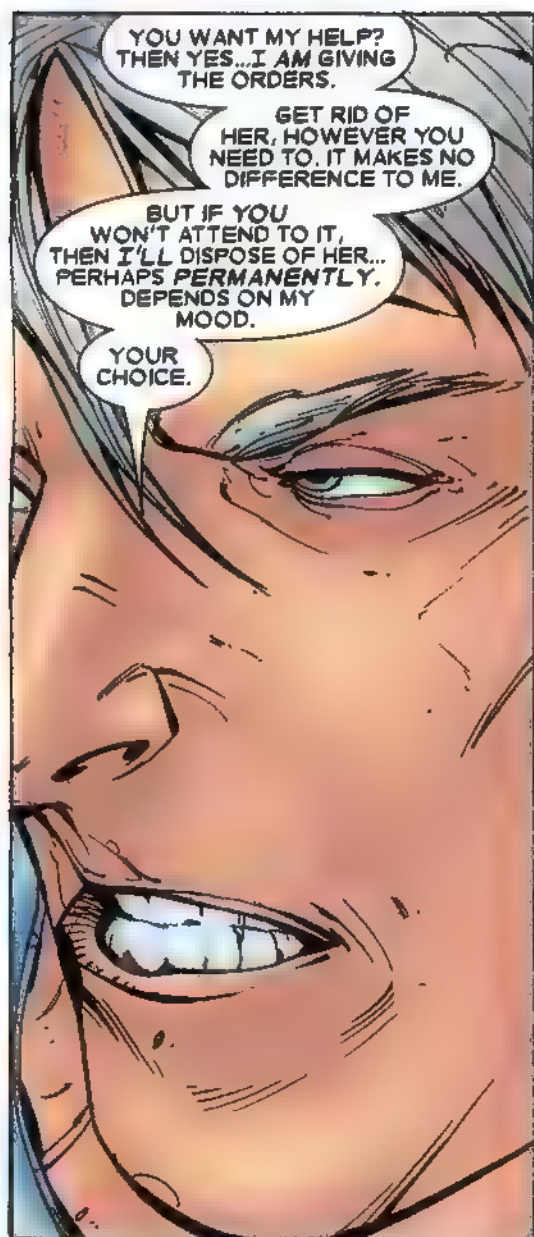
WHAT I
COULD.
GET
HER OUT OF
HERE.



BUT...WE
COULD USE HER
AS A HOSTAGE OR
SOMETHING.

NO.

LOOK,
YOU'RE NOT
GIVING THE
ORDERS
HERE--



YOU WANT MY HELP?
THEN YES...I AM GIVING
THE ORDERS.

GET RID OF
HER, HOWEVER YOU
NEED TO. IT MAKES NO
DIFFERENCE TO ME.

BUT IF YOU
WON'T ATTEND TO IT,
THEN I'LL DISPOSE OF HER...
PERHAPS PERMANENTLY.
DEPENDS ON MY
MOOD.

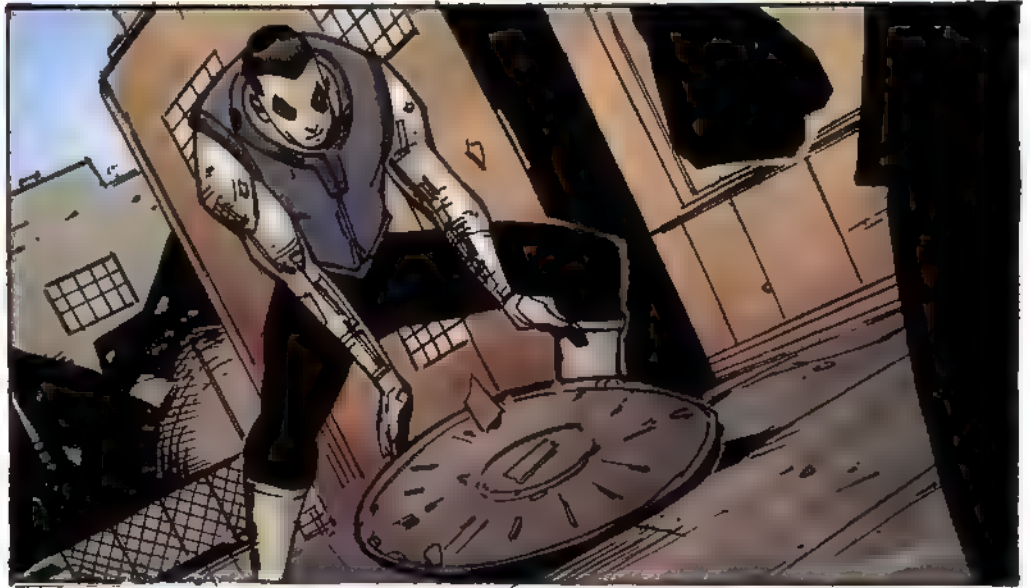
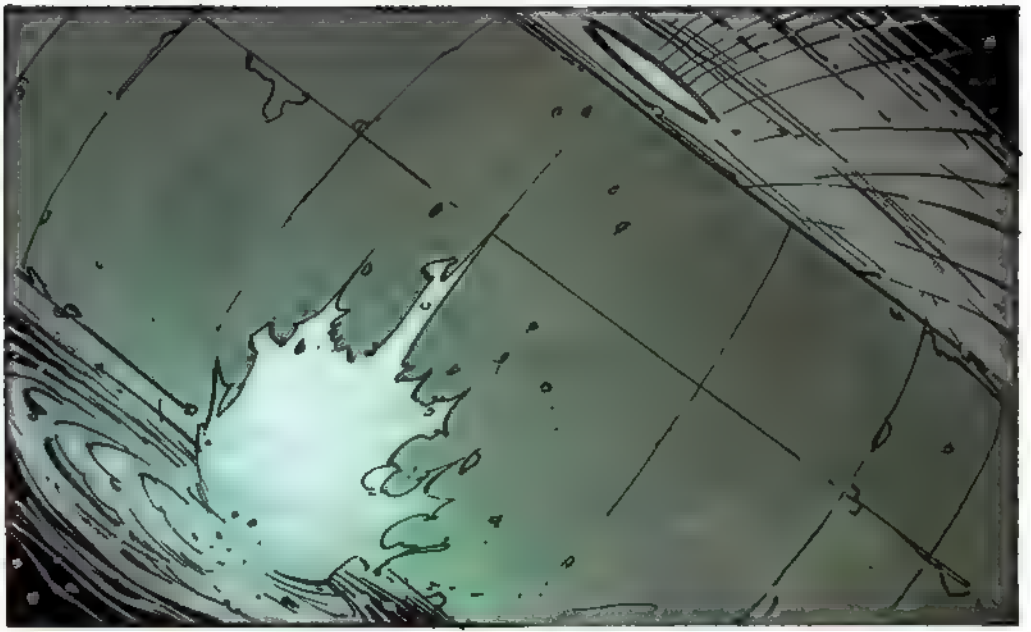
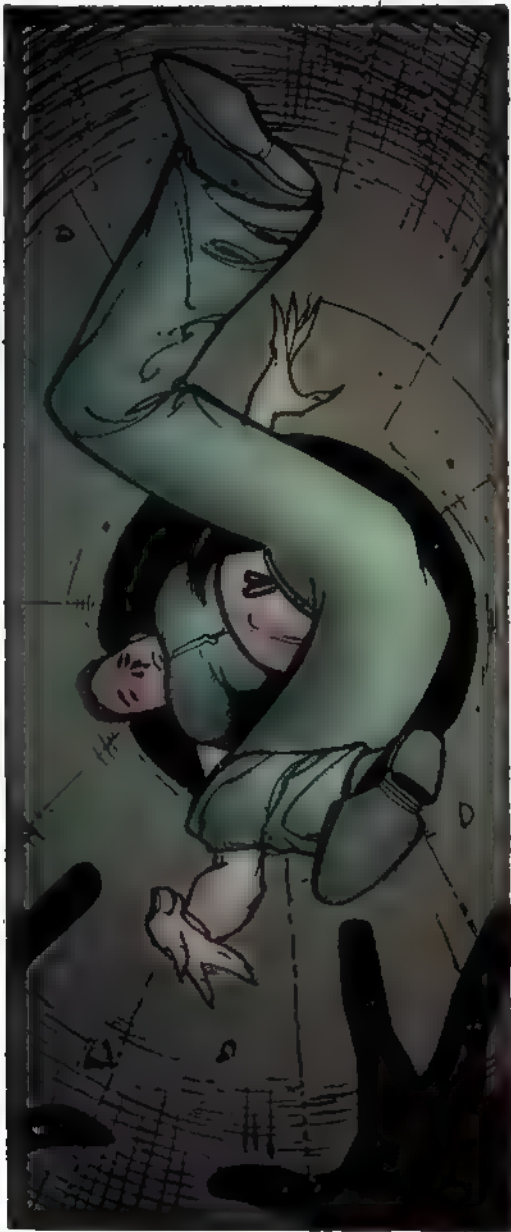
YOUR
CHOICE.



THAT'S RIGHT...
WHATEVER IS
NEEDED...



...WHETHER
THEY
AGREE WITH
IT OR NOT.





IT HURTS!

WELL, IF YOU'D GIVEN IT ENOUGH TIME FOR THE NOVOCAINE TO KICK IN...

WE DON'T HAVE TIME! THEY GOT AWAY BECAUSE OF ME!

NOT ALL OF THEM.



I'M NOT TELLING YOU JACK!

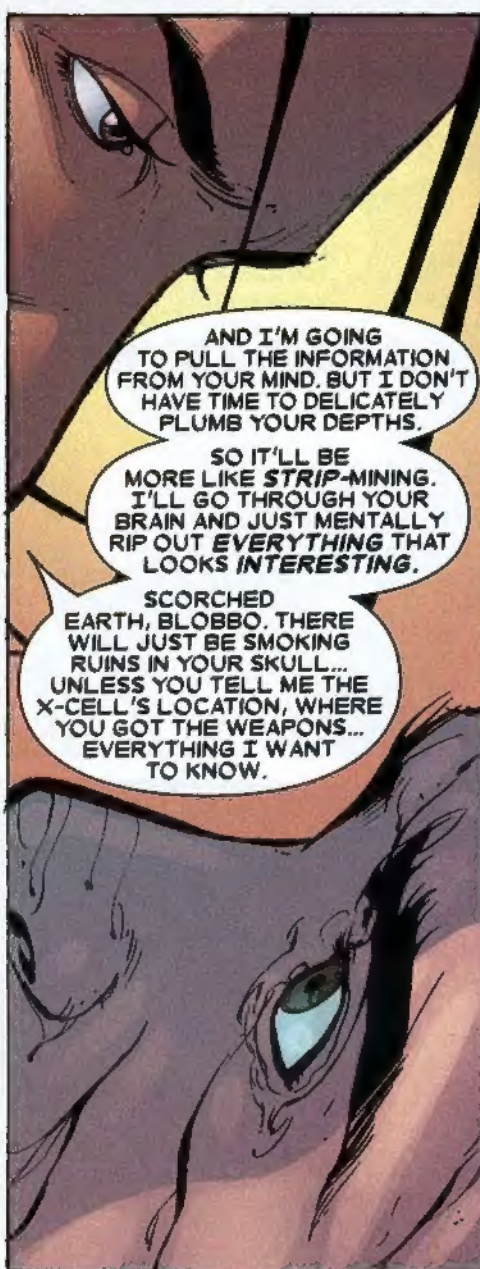


OH, PLEASE DON'T, CHER. I'M HOPEING YOU WON'T. I'M PRAYING YOU WON'T.

BECAUSE WHEN YOU DON'T, MADROX HERE IS GOING TO TURN ME LOOSE ON YOUR MIND. WON'T YOU, MADROX?

NO CHOICE BUT TO.

HEAR THAT? NO CHOICE.



AND I'M GOING TO PULL THE INFORMATION FROM YOUR MIND. BUT I DON'T HAVE TIME TO DELICATELY PLUMB YOUR DEPTHS.

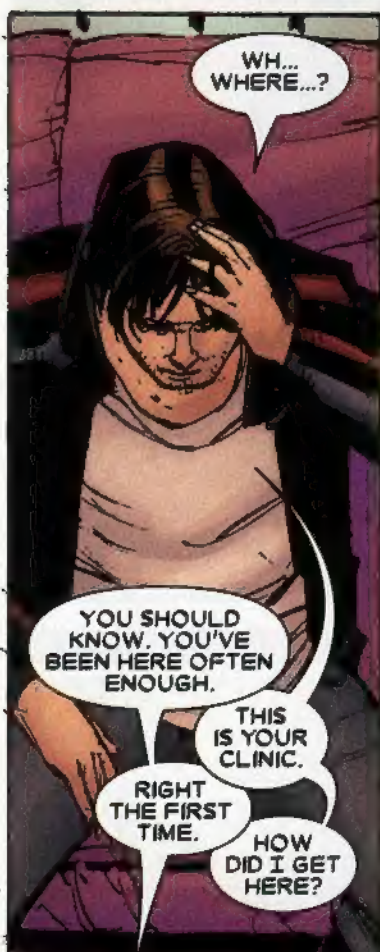
SO IT'LL BE MORE LIKE STRIP-MINING. I'LL GO THROUGH YOUR BRAIN AND JUST MENTALLY RIP OUT EVERYTHING THAT LOOKS INTERESTING.

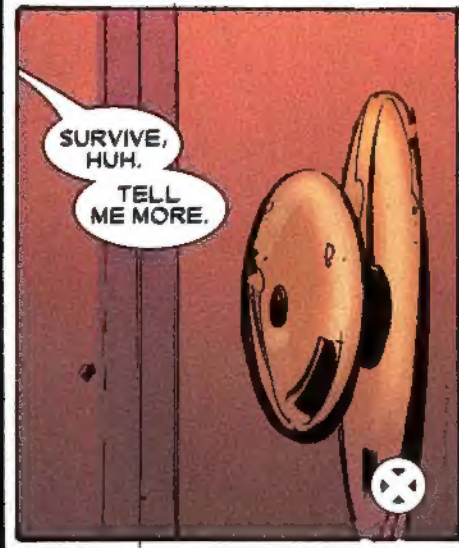
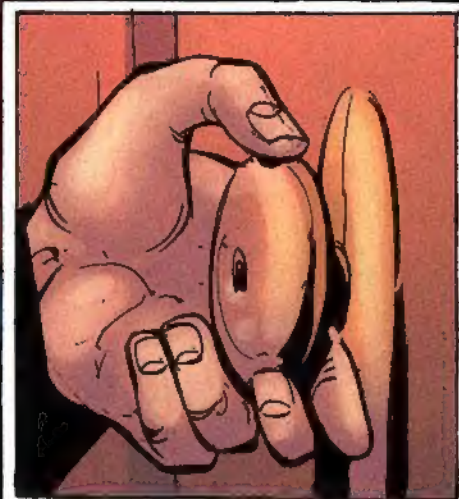
SCORCHED EARTH, BLOBBO. THERE WILL JUST BE SMOKING RUINS IN YOUR SKULL... UNLESS YOU TELL ME THE X-CELL'S LOCATION, WHERE YOU GOT THE WEAPONS... EVERYTHING I WANT TO KNOW.



IS IT... ALWAYS LIKE THIS AROUND HERE?

ACTUALLY, THIS IS A SLOW DAY.





Diesel Industry
DCP Scan

